

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CU-04 SS-15 NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TS

SUBJECT: PAN AFRICAN YOUTH FESTIVAL

REF: TUNIS 4201

1. SUMMARY: FESTIVAL ENDED JULY 22 WITH IMPRESSIVE FINAL CEREMONY ATTENDED BY PRIMIN NOUIRA. USDEL GAVE WELL RECEIVED SPEECH JULY 20. ACTIVITIES JULY 21 AND 22 POINTED UP EXCELLENT JOB DONE BY TUNISIANS IN ORGANIZING AND BRINGING OFF FESTIVAL. WHILE FESTIVAL ACHIEVED LITTLE CONCRETE OF POLITICAL NATURE AND WAS MARKED BY SOME ARAB-BLACK AFRICAN TENSION, IT DID NOT DISINTEGRATE AS APPEARED LIKELY, AND DID PRESENT AFRICAN YOUTH WITH OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE IDEAS AND GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER, AND IN THIS SENSE WAS SUCCESSFUL. END SUMMARY.

2. FESTIVAL REPORTEDLY ATTENDED BY 4048 AFRICAN DELEGATES AND 196 FOREIGN OBSERVERS, CLOSED EVENING JULY 22 WITH IMPRESSIVE FINAL CEREMONY, FEATURING FOOTBALL FINAL, CULTURAL FOLKLORE PRESENTATIONS AND SPECTACULAR FIRWORKS DISPLAY. PRIMIN NOUIRA ATTENDED AND GAVE SHORT SPEECH. JULY 21, DAY OF AFRICA, FEATURED PARADE THROUGH DOWNTOWN TUNIS WITH TEN FLOATS, BANDS, FLAGS AND MOST DELEGATIONS. PARADE WARMLY APPLAUDED AND CHEERED BY TUNISIANS WHO WERE CROWDED ABOUT FOUR DEEP ON BOTH SIDES OF ONE AND ONE-HALF MILE PARADE ROUTE. OUTDOOR BALL HELD EVENING OF JULY 21 IN LOCAL

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STADIUM ATTENDED BY ESTIMATED 3500 DELEGATES WITH FOUR

BANDS OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES PLAYING MODERN MUSIC, SEVERAL CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS AND MANY DELEGATES DANCING ON THE FIELD. THESE FINAL TWO DAYS UNDERSCORED EXCELLENT TECHNICAL JOB DONE BY TUNISIANS IN ORGANIZING AND BRINGING OFF FESTIVAL.

3. FESTIVAL MEETINGS, HOWEVER, CONTINUED TO BE SIMPLE SPEECH MAKING SESSIONS WITH NO DEBATE AND DECLINING ATTENDANCE AND INTEREST. NONETHELESS, THERE WERE SEVERAL HIGH POINTS. ONE WAS ALGERIAN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE TOPIC OF JULY 20 FROM "UNIVERSITY IN AFRICA" TO "ZIONIST PENETRATION IN AFRICA", ALLEGEDLY BECAUSE ITS EXPERT ON FIRST SUBJECT HAD NOT ARRIVED. SENEGALESE HOTLY RESISTED THIS ATTEMPT AND CHAIR RULED IN FAVOR OF SENEGALESE. HOWEVER, SENEGALESE SPEAKER UNABLE TO CONTINUE AS ALGERIANS BEGAN BEATING ON DESKS AND GRABBING MICROPHONE. CHAIR FINALLY RECESSED SESSION AND AFTER TWO HOUR NEGOTIATION AGREEMENT WORKED OUT TO CONTINUE UNIVERSITY DISCUSSION. INCIDENT ONE OF VISIBLE SIGNS OF ARAB-BLACK AFRICAN TENSION NOTICEABLE THROUGHOUT FESTIVAL. (U.S. DELEGATION SAID THAT SEVERAL TIMES BLACK AFRICANS PRIVATELY MENTIONED THEIR DISAPPROVAL OF ARAB ATTEMPT TO CONTINUALLY TURN CONFERENCE TOWARD MIDEAST ISSUES AND THEIR DISENCHANTMENT WITH ARAB LACK OF RESPECT FOR CONFERENCE DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES.)

4. SPEECH GIVEN BY U.S. DELEGATE VELMA HILL, VICE PRESIDENT AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, WELL RECEIVED. HILL WARMLY APPLAUDED BEFORE SPEECH AND RECEIVED STANDING OVATION AND MANY CONGRATULATIONS AFTER FINISHING. WINDUP OF SPEECH FEATURING HILL BREAKING INTO CIVIL RIGHTS SONG ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE. TEXT OF SPEECH WILL BE FURNISHED C/Y. U.S. DELEGATION AND EMBASSY ALSO GAVE JOINT LUNCHEON FOR SOME LEADERS OF TUNISIAN DELEGATION WHICH GAVE OPPORTUNITY FOR CLOSER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN TWO DELEGATIONS AND CONTACTS FOR THE FUTURE.

5. U.S. DELEGATION COMMENTED THAT FESTIVAL HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY SOVIETS, WHO HAD GOOD PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH ORGANIZERS (FESTIVAL DELEGATION VISITED MOSCOW BEFORE FESTIVAL AND SOVIET DELEGATION ARRIVED WEEK BEFORE FESTIVAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STARTED -- TUNIS 3759) AND THUS SOVIETS HAD NO TROUBLE SPEAKING WHEN THEY WANTED. USDEL IN CONTRAST HAD TWO DAYS OF DIFFICULT DISCUSSIONS BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO SPEAK. THEY FELT BETTER PREPARATION, INCLUDING MORE IN DEPTH BRIEFING IN DEPARTMENT AND EARLIER ARRIVAL OF DELEGATION WOULD HAVE MADE U.S. ROLE MORE EFFECTIVE. AS IT WAS, THEY FELT U.S. PRESENCE WAS POSITIVE. THEY MADE IMPORTANT CONTACTS, WERE ABLE TO EXPLAIN U.S. YOUTH OPINIONS ON SEVERAL ISSUES AS WELL AS

U.S. RATIONALE FOR NOT ATTENDING UPCOMING WORLD FESTIVAL IN
BERLIN.

6 COMMENT: FESTIVAL WAS WELL ORGANIZED AND WAS
CERTAINLY COSMETIC SUCCESS. FACT THAT AFRICAN YOUTH
COULD ORGANIZE AND HOLD SUCH A FESTIVAL IN ITSELF IMPORTANT,
AS WERE EXCHANGES OF IDEAS AND PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS. FESTIVAL
WAS FIRST ONE, AND THIS FACT COUPLED WITH THE VENUE OF TUNIS
UNDOUBTEDLY SERVED TO KEEP FESTIVAL GENERALLY MODERATE
POLITICALLY AND IN PART EXPLAINS ABSENCE OF ANY CONCRETE
POLITICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. DESPITE SOME RESENTMENT OVER ARAB
DELEGATIONS' TACTICS, FESTIVAL LIKELY TO PRODUCE INCREASED
SYMPATHY OF MANY BLACK AFRICANS WITH PALESTINIANS
SINCE BLACKS HEARD ABOUT PALESTINIAN PROBLEM CONTINUALLY
THROUGHOUT WEEK. LIKELY THAT NEXT FESTIVAL (WHEN AND WHERE
STILL NOT DETERMINED) WILL BE MUCH MORE RADICAL AND POLITICAL
NOW THAT AFRICA HAS "PROVED" IT CAN HOLD SUCCESSFUL YOUTH
FESTIVAL. GENERAL RESOLUTION WHICH READ IN ABBREVIATED FORM
AT FINAL CEREMONY STILL NOT PUBLISHED HERE.

7. DEPT REPEAT AF POST IF DESIRED.

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